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ABSTRACT

In most schools, teacher evaluation and supervision are seldom mutually exclusive. This paper synthesizes research findings and capitalizes on experience concerning these sensitive processes. After discussing three basic purposes for supervision-evaluation (staff development, school improvement, and personnel decisions), the paper carefully defines each process. Clinical supervision involves a four-step cycle (preobservation planning, observation, lesson analysis, and conference with the teacher). While supervision is built on trust and a helping atmosphere, evaluation is judgmental and founded on law or policy statements. A 1984 Rand Corporation study reported five major problems with teacher evaluation processes: (1) principals' incompetence, (2) teachers' resistance or apathy, (3) lack of uniformity and consistency, (4) inadequate training for evaluators, and (5) shortcomings concerning secondary school staff evaluation. The paper next discusses training requirements and two evaluation instruments addressing these problems. Alternative data sources, such as student evaluations and lesson guides, are also discussed. A well-defined, collaboratively developed system should improve teacher-principal communication and awareness of instructional objectives, focus attention on curriculum development, build collegial relationships, and produce more effective schools. Five key requirements for effective teacher supervision-evaluation systems promoted by Rand Corporation are also summarized. (MLH)

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FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

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FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

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In most schools, supervision and evaluation of teachers are seldom mutually exclusive. Principals or persons designated by them decide whether teachers are supervised or evaluated, both or neither. This paper was developed to synthesize research findings and to capitalize on experience concerning the sensitive processes of teacher supervision and evaluation.

Purposes of Supervision - Evaluation Processes

There are at least three basic purposes for supervision-evaluation processes. They are: (1) staff development, (2) school improvement and (3) personnel decisions. The first two purposes involve improvement. Supervision is the mode that should be used for these purposes. Supervision concentrates on the in-class performance of teachers.

Personnel decisions involve accountability. They require the evaluation mode. Career ladder decisions, leadership selection decisions and separation decisions depend upon carefully documented evaluation. Evaluation includes in-class performance but generally includes out-of-class performances as well.

Supervision for individual and school improvement must produce descriptive data. This data should illuminate factors in teacher performance that both teacher and supervisor agree can be changed. In addition, the supervisor-principal must be ready to provide useful alternative strategies. A supervisory process can contribute to overall school improvement if the process is well-defined, achieves teacher acceptance and is effectively implemented school-wide. Supervision is not an ancillary activity. It is a vital part of a larger strategy for school improvement.

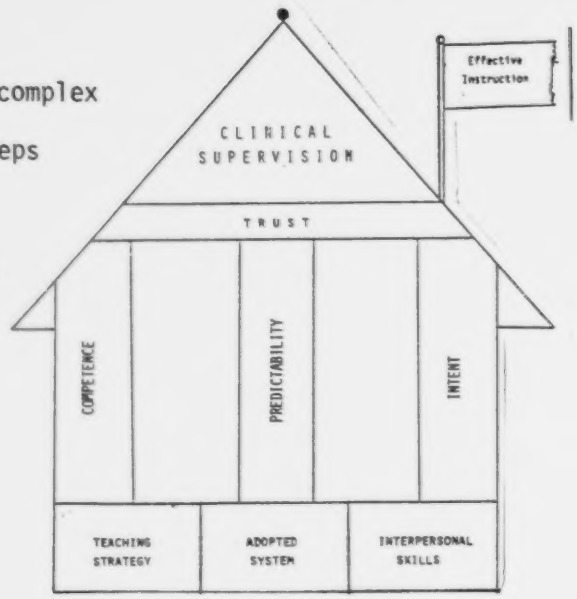
Definitions

Defining supervision-evaluation processes is a vital first step in any discussion of the roles of the players involved. The definitions provided here may not be acceptable in all quarters. That short-coming is not so important as is the need to establish acceptable definitions within school districts. A common language among supervisors-evaluators and those subject to supervision or evaluation is crucial to an effective process.

Supervision - Supervision is a formative act. It includes a series of carefully planned steps that stress improvement of in-class performance. The objective of supervision is the improvement of instructional performance through a carefully planned and executed cycle of supervisor observations. The long-range goal of supervision is the development of a more autonomous, self-directed teacher, one who will accept input on the instructional act, evaluate it and then make the changes necessary for improved instruction. For we know that the teacher must "...recognize that the locus of evaluation, the center of responsibility, lies with himself." (Spanger, 1982) That is, until the teacher accepts change as something of value, that change will not occur in the classroom. The most common form of supervision is clinical in nature, originally developed by Cogan (1973). It uses the following four-step cycle:

1. pre-observation planning
2. observation (with written record)
3. analysis of the lesson
4. conference with the teacher

Clinical supervision is a much more complex process than merely following the above steps when working with a teacher. The concept might best be illustrated by this diagram:



There are three foundation blocks which support clinical supervision. The first, "teaching strategy", illustrates the idea that the supervisor and the person being supervised must be working from a common set of notions about what effective teaching is. Both must agree on a set of factors which increase the probability that student learning will occur. An effective supervisor must be able to recognize, label and describe profitable teaching strategies when s/he sees them performed.

The second foundation block is an "adopted clinical supervision system." It would be very difficult to use clinical supervision if there was not district-wide support and agreement on just how supervision was to be carried out in the district. School boards and administrators should develop, in concert with teachers, a written policy-level agreement on how clinical supervision is to be used in the district. That document should be available to teachers and administrators, and be a source of pride in the district.

The third foundation block is labeled "interpersonal relations", a set of skills a supervisor must have. Without them the "building" will collapse.

The horizontal support (truss) just below the roof of the building is labeled "trust". Trust makes clinical supervision work. It develops from

openness between the supervisor and those being supervised. Trust is facilitated when both parties admit fallibility and the possibility for error in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

The "trust" truss is supported by three pillars labeled "competency", "predictability", and "intent". If a supervisor knows effective instruction when s/he sees it in action and can label and describe the act, then that supervisor will likely be seen as competent. If there is a district-wide system of clinical supervision that is "up-front" and well planned, predictability will be established to support trust. If supervisors are equipped with interpersonal communication skills, their intent to be helpers in the supervision process will be apparent.

Evaluation - While supervision is built on trust and a helping atmosphere, evaluation is judgmental and finds its foundation in law or statements of policy. A typical example taken from Idaho Code Section 33-514 follows:

> "The board of trustees shall establish criteria and procedures for the supervision and evaluation of certified employees...." (p. 26)

These legal requirements incorporate due process and typically result in a district evaluation check-list to be completed by an administrator on a regular schedule. The role of evaluator is defined (usually the principal) while in supervision, the role of supervisor is prescribed. (Sullivan, 1980)

However, more and more districts are concerned about how the evaluation of teachers affects teaching. There is growing suspicion that evaluation may not contribute to improved instruction. In some districts, the evaluation mode is reserved for those few teachers whose performance has been judged to be marginal. Efforts in these districts are concentrated in the supervision mode. (Freer, Dawson, 1985)

Problems with Evaluation

A Rand Corporation study in 1984 provided a national perspective on teacher evaluation processes. This study reported five major problems associated with teacher evaluation practices. They were:

1. Principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate effectively.
2. Teachers either resisted evaluation or were apathetic about it.
3. Evaluation within school systems lacked uniformity and consistency.
4. Evaluators were inadequately trained.
5. There were particular shortcomings in the evaluation of secondary school staff and specialists. (Wise, et al, 1984)

In a second series of studies, Natriello and Dornbusch found that a surprising number of teachers in schools know little about the criteria used in their evaluation. Principals in the same schools thought that almost all teachers knew the criteria being used. The Natriello-Dornbusch studies further revealed that generally teachers received summative evaluations only once in three years. Most teachers were more disconcerted about lack of feedback than about negative feedback. (Natriello and Dornbusch, 1981) From these studies, one could conclude that whether teacher evaluation is general or limited to marginal performers, it must be well defined and supported by training.

Training Requirements

There is general agreement among the authors cited in this discussion, that thorough training is an absolute necessity for the implementation of effective teacher supervision-evaluation systems -- training of administrators and teachers.

Specifically, training is necessary (1) to identify and clarify expectations, (2) to define and clarify terms and (3) to sharpen data-gathering skills. Teachers and administrators in a school need training in order to promote a cooperative effort in establishing shared expectations on the elements of effective instruction. A shared understanding and agreed upon language to define basic principles present in good teaching are required. These basic principles should be based upon authoritative work in the field of education. Defining goals and objectives in the various curricula offered in schools contribute to this process. Agreement concerning effective teaching practices is complemented by agreement on what is to be learned by students. Those involved in using a supervision model or an evaluation instrument must be skilled in gathering objective evidence that supports (from both the principals' and teachers' viewpoints) supervisory or evaluation conferences. It is vital that the teacher and the principal recognize what the teacher is doing when s/he teaches, why the teacher is choosing to do what s/he does, and how the teacher is affecting student learning. If the supervisor does not recognize effective (or ineffective) instruction when s/he sees it and/or is unable to support that judgment with objective evidence, the system will lose appeal quickly. (Hunter, 1982)

Evaluation Instruments

Two evaluation instruments are illustrated here. The first was adapted from the work of Madeline Hunter and Russell Joki. As a result of mutual administrator-teacher training within a given school district, this instrument will, no doubt, be modified. It is not intended for use "as is" but as a point of departure for teachers and administrators interested in the development of an instrument about which they can mutually agree. For example, item five suggests that the principal can determine whether or not the teacher is

adjusting instruction for the different needs of students. In some settings, such a judgment may not be possible because the principal will not know the students as well as the teacher. Agreement with this view would result in the deletion of item five during the evaluation conference. (Joki, 1982) Every item on the instrument is subject to this kind of review and possible modification.

It should also be noted that the explanatory phrases for each item can be changed. More descriptive terms might be devised.

Finally, it may be necessary to use the instrument for a period of time to test its validity. It is possible to establish district norms or expectations for each of the items or for the instrument as a whole. For example, a teacher eligible for the top rung of a career ladder might be required to get straight "C's" on the instrument.

AN EVALUATION OF TEACHING

Name of Teacher _____ Date _____

1. Anticipatory or advanced organizer set for the lesson

(a)	(b)	(c)
No preparatory action or discussion	Present, but too limited	Clear and deliberate use of advanced organizers--motivating in nature

Evidence:

2. Teaching to an objective

(a)	(b)	(c)
No reference to objectives	Reference to, but no emphasis on objectives	Objectives clear and emphasized

Evidence:

3. Input

(a)	(b)	(c)
No evidence of input	References, discussion, demonstrations or lectures for input	Clear and concise input strategies

Evidence:

4. Correct level of difficulty

(a) Too easy/hard for almost all	(b) Right for some, not for others	(c) Just right for almost all

Planning and use of objectives take into account the differing skill levels, sophistication and learning styles of the students.

Evidence:

5. Monitoring and adjusting to student needs

(a) No monitoring or adjustment	(b) Monitoring inadequate or ineffective	(c) Monitoring appropriate or unnecessary

During presentation and practice steps of a lesson, the teacher monitors pupil participation and understanding, and may adjust the strategy.

Evidence:

6. Command of subject matter

(a) Unsure and uncomfortable	(b) Adequate background in subject	(c) Confident delivery with solid background

Uses district curriculum. Teaching assignment must fit teacher subject preparation.

Evidence:

7. Checking for understanding

(a) No effort to check for understanding	(b) Limited concern	(c) Frequent checking by teacher

Evidence:

8. Room environment

(a) Disorganized or sterile	(b) Cluttered or little attention to environment, but functional	(c) Attractive, appropriately organized and productive

Evidence:

9. Climate

(a) Little humor; no evidence of an attempt to establish rapport	(b) Reasonably productive	(c) A feeling of belonging, humor, and high expectations for achievement prevails

Evidence:

*10. Use of the principles of learning

(a) Almost no use of principles | (b) Knowledge of principles evident | (c) Constant use of principles

The teacher reinforces, motivates, teaches for transfer and retention, plans for pacing, and uses varying degrees of complexity to match learning sophistication.

Evidence:

* To be used only if both principal and teacher know and can apply principles of learning.

Rater _____ Date _____

Discriminating Evaluation Items

The evaluation items in the next list were taken from the work of Manatt, et al. These items fall into five categories. The items are arranged in order of discriminating power under each heading.

District personnel could devise an appraisal instrument by drawing items from this list. A three-point scale could be used with the selected items, i.e., "superior performance", "meets district standard", or "needs improvement". Acceptable standards could be established as with the first instrument.

Items For An Evaluation Instrument

Productive Teaching Techniques

1. The teacher uses probing questions for understanding of concepts and relationships, and for feedback to the teacher.
2. The teacher uses student ideas in instruction.
3. The teacher uses structuring comments, such as examples, to serve as advance organizers.
4. The teacher uses varied teaching strategies and materials that stimulate student learning.
5. The teacher explains things well, puts ideas across logically and in an orderly way.
6. The teacher provides opportunities for pupils to learn material on which they will later be tested.

Positive Interpersonal Relations

1. The teacher shows respect for his/her pupils.
2. The teacher is tolerant of students whose ideas differ from his/hers.
3. The teacher uses supportive criticism rather than blame, shame or sarcasm.
4. The teacher is readily available to students.
5. The teacher is fair and impartial in treatment of pupils.
6. The teacher provides opportunities for all pupils to explain success.

Organized/Structured Class Management

1. The teacher constantly monitors pupil progress and adjusts the pace accordingly.
2. The teacher presents material in a well-organized fashion in order to use class time effectively.
3. The teacher has well-defined objectives for his/her pupils, and works toward them.
4. The teacher uses pupil assignments that are relevant and sufficient for in-depth learning.
5. The teacher is task-oriented but flexible and maintains a sense of humor.
6. The teacher keeps the "difficulty level of instruction" appropriate for each individual.

Intellectual Stimulation

1. The teacher inspires students to seek more knowledge.
2. The teacher is a caring person.
3. The teacher is enthusiastic.
4. The teacher sustains pupil attention and interest with activities appropriate to various pupil levels.
5. The teacher and pupils share in the enjoyment of humorous situations.

Desirable Out-of-Class Behavior

1. The teacher is a good team worker.
2. The teacher strives for improvement through positive participation in professional growth activities.
3. The teacher assumes responsibilities outside the classroom as they relate to school.
4. The teacher is committed to the primary goal of assisting pupil growth.
5. The teacher utilizes community resources in instruction.
6. The teacher effectively reports pupil progress to parents.

Objectives or Growth Plans

The authors cited in this discussion generally recommend the use of objectives or growth plans. Mutual objective-setting or growth plan development between the principal and teacher form the foundation for improvement and for subsequent supervisory or evaluation cycles.

Alternative Data Sources

In some situations, principals may need additional evaluative data beyond that acquired from classroom observations but still focusing on the teaching act. Teachers may also express interest in alternative sources of data, particularly if they are part of a collegial team of teachers striving for self-improvement.

Student Evaluation

Soliciting student input by teachers as an evaluation data source can be effective if care is exercised in eliciting responses and in structuring the student instrument. Student evaluation appears to be more relevant when it is based upon descriptive statements. Students should be asked what occurs or what exists in a classroom. For example, "Everyone is treated fairly in here" or "This class is always well planned" are items that avoid having students make judgments about professional teachering acts per se. Results obtained by a teacher might be shared with the principal or with colleagues.

Artifact Collection

Another source of data about the teaching act involves collecting artifacts. Artifacts include lesson guides, assignments, tests and practice activities. Reviewing teacher artifacts can be valuable in view of recent research which indicates that more than half of a student's school day may be involved with seat work.

Collaborative Effort

The supervision and appraisal system in a school district should be collaboratively developed. Improving schools requires a collegial atmosphere

where teachers and administrators have developed an agreed-upon language to describe teaching, an understanding of district and principal expectations, and a respect for positive interpersonal communication. This agreement can then become the basis for a mutually satisfactory system of supervision and evaluation.

Positive Results

A well defined, collaboratively developed supervision-evaluation system in a school district can be expected to contribute to these positive results.

1. Improved teacher-principal communication. Communication implies reciprocal understanding of the purposes of the process and the process itself.
2. Increased teacher-principal awareness of instructional objectives and effective classroom practices.
3. Greater attention to the definition of curricula including scope, sequence, goals and objectives.
4. Collegial, trust-building relationships among teachers and the principal which capitalize on professional expertise. Each teacher can be viewed as capable of making a significant and unique contribution to the overall improvement of curriculum implementation in the school.
5. More effective schools can be expected. More effective schools produce more learning for students in a collaborative atmosphere.

The Rand study of teacher evaluation in thirty-two school districts in the U.S. produced five key requirements for effective teacher supervision-evaluation systems. They are:

1. Top level leadership. A district-wide commitment to the design, development and implementation of a supervision-evaluation process is required. This requirement suggests that administrators must begin the development process using strategies that ultimately

involve input from the entire staff. Effective supervision-evaluation procedures are not done to teachers but with their understanding and support.

2. Supervisor-evaluator competence. District resources must be committed to ensure that principals have the expertise required for effective supervision and evaluation procedures.

3. Teacher-administrator collaboration. Collaboration in this context means that the elements of the supervision-evaluation process are mutually developed. There are no surprises in the system. Teachers understand the criteria to be used. Descriptive language is mutually developed and understood. Pre and post conferences are expected and prescriptions for improvement are unambiguous and specific.

4. Strategic compatibility. The supervision-evaluation process must be strategically compatible with overall district educational goals and with adopted district curricula. Curricula must be "tightly coupled" K-12 so that there is a clear understanding among the professional staff about what skills, knowledge and attitudes are to be learned. Teams of teachers and administrators can then jointly contribute to overall school excellence.

5. Time. Creating a strategically compatible supervision-evaluation process will require time. A long-range plan involving training and opportunities for collaborative decision-making on curriculum issues is necessary. As stated earlier in this discussion, the

supervision-evaluation system developed in a school district is not ancillary activity. It should be part of an overall school improvement process. The school improvement process requires district commitment. Commitment includes leadership, planning, professional involvement and district resources. Specific budget allocations to this process are required on an annual basis if progress is to be made.

Learning opportunities for students in most schools can be improved by attention to factors that are within the control of school personnel. Supervision-evaluation processes are among the factors that are amenable to change and improvement. Efforts to this end have significant potential for individual and school improvement and for the development of a professionally satisfying environment.

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